

CHAPTER: IV APPLICATION	SECTION: 12 DECISIONS	COMAR: 07.03.03.05
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REQUIREMENTS

- A. Make a decision on case eligibility and payment:
 1. As promptly as possible, but
 2. No later than 30 calendar days from the date the application was filed
- B. The possible case decisions are:
 1. Eligible
 2. Ineligible

DECISION TIMELINES

- A. The applicant is entitled to a decision as promptly as possible
- B. Send the applicant written notice of the decision no later than the 30th day from the date the application was filed, unless
 1. There are unavoidable administrative delays, or
 2. The applicant meets the exceptions in D. 2 below, **and**
 3. The case manager sends a notice explaining the delay and the expected decision date
- C. Give applicants at least 10 days to provide verifications and complete other requirements
- D. Do not extend the decision date when the applicant:
 1. Fails to provide verification, or
 2. Fails to complete application requirements, **except** when:
 - The individual is told about the requirements or verifications more than 20 days after the application filing date
 - The individual must complete certain requirements to lift a sanction and is not able to do so within 30 days through no fault of his or her own, or
 - The individual is making a good faith effort to get verification, but is having a problem obtaining required information

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Note: The case manager needs to help applicants who are having problems obtaining proofs.

This occurs most often when the applicant is not the child's parent,
or

The family moved from another state and did not or could not bring essential documents with them.

Note: Examples of administrative delays are unscheduled closings due to weather or natural disasters and staff shortages due to colds or flu epidemics, extended absences, or loss of staff. The local department Director determines unavoidable administrative delays.

DELAYS

- A. Code a customer delay when the applicant is making a good faith effort to obtain verification and is not able to get the information within 30 days
- B. Code an agency delay in all other instances
- C. An application cannot be pended for more than 60 days; CARES will automatically deny on the 60th day with generic closing code 235

CASE DECISIONS

- A. The case is eligible when:
 - 1. All technical factors of eligibility are met, and
 - 2. The family's countable income and assets are within the allowable standards
 - Individuals in the family who do not meet technical eligibility are excluded from the paid case, although their income and assets may be counted (See Assistance Unit – Basic Requirements)

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- B. The case is ineligible when:
1. At least one technical factor is not met for all individuals applying
 2. A technical factor is not met which affects the family's eligibility, not just an individual
 3. The family's countable income or assets are above the standards
 4. There is insufficient information to make a decision, including instances where the applicant does not provide verification
 5. The applicant voluntarily withdraws the application, and the case manager
 - Sends a notice confirming the voluntary withdrawal
 - Makes a note in the case record confirming that the notice was sent
 6. The applicant cannot be located
 7. The applicant died

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- A. When a case is denied for TCA because of technical reasons, income, or assets:
1. Determine eligibility for Food Stamps unless the family specifically did not want to apply for that program
 2. Determine eligibility for Medical Assistance
 - If the family is not eligible in the Family and Children (FAC) category, the children or pregnant woman may be eligible for Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP)
- B. When a case is denied for TCA because of insufficient information:
1. Determine if there is sufficient information to establish eligibility for Food Stamps and Medical Assistance, including MCHP
 2. Make an eligibility decision for each program

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- C. When a case is denied because the applicant voluntarily withdraws the TCA application:
1. Ask the family if they want Food Stamps and Medical Assistance
 2. If one or both benefits are requested:
 - Determine if there is enough information
 - Tell the applicant immediately if more information is needed
 - Make a decision within 30 days of application
- D. When the TCA case is eligible, but an individual in the assistance unit is not:
1. Process the Food Stamp application including that individual unless he or she is also ineligible for that program
 2. Determine if the individual is eligible for Medical Assistance

VERIFICATION

- Narration on CARES and documentation in the case record must support the case manager's decision

EXAMPLES

- Example 1. Mary Marlon applied for TCA for herself and her daughter on May 22. She was interviewed on the same day and given a list of what she needed to return by June 5. On June 4, Ms. Marlon brought in social security numbers, documentation of her job search and her compliance with child support requirements. At that point, she was reminded to bring or send her bank statements, but she never did.
- Deny the TCA case on June 21 for failure to bring required verification
 - Process medical assistance for the daughter; MCHP has no asset test
 - Deny the food stamp application since assets must be verified for that program

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Example 2. Alice Bluegown applied for TCA for herself, her son, Tyrone, and her nephew, Alex on June 10. She provided all verifications and met the application requirements on July 3, except that she does not have Alex's Social Security number. Her brother, Alex's father, has promised to send it, but has not done so yet. Alex's father does not have a telephone and is unemployed. Alex has never been in an assistance unit. Ms. Bluegown has not been able to apply for a replacement card because she does not have all the pertinent data.

- Approve the case no later than July 10 for Alice and Tyrone
- Deny TCA for Alex

Note: Ms. Bluegown could choose to have the case action delayed beyond 30 days while she continued trying to get Alex's social security card.

- Tell Ms. Bluegown to re-apply for Alex when she has his Social Security number or can apply for a number
- Allow Alex to be certified as part of the Food Stamp household – see Food Stamp Manual for details
- Process Medical Assistance (MCHP) for Alex

Example 3. Byron Bacon applies for himself and 2 children on August 26 because he and his wife have just separated. He is employed part time, earning \$200 per week and has no child care costs. His net income, using the initial needs test disregard of 20% is \$640. Mr. Bacon's income is overscale.

- Deny the TCA case on August 26, at the time the case is found to be ineligible
- Continue to process the Food Stamp and Medical Assistance applications

Example 4. Carolyn Carpenter applies for herself and 3 children on September 16. She meets the technical and financial factors for all family members on October 3.

- Approve the TCA case on October 3, when all eligibility factors are met

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Example 5. Diana Divan applies for herself and her son on November 12. The case manager sent her a reminder on November 26 to return all verifications no later than December 5. The letter was returned to the local department on November 30 as not deliverable. The telephone number is also not in service. There is no further contact with Ms. Divan

- Deny the TCA case on December 12 because the family could not be located
- Deny Food Stamps and Medical Assistance applications for the same reason

Example 6. Ellen Edwards applies for TCA for herself and her 2 daughters on March 14. Ms. Edwards was sanctioned in January for failure to appear in court for the child support hearing. She is now willing to cooperate and the hearing is scheduled for April 25. All other eligibility is met.

- Do not make the TCA case decision until April 25 because the case cannot be approved until Ms. Edwards appears for the hearing
- When Ms. Edwards complies on April 25, the family is eligible for a full month benefit for April
- No benefits are paid for March because Ms. Edwards could not fulfill the requirement to lift the sanction until April
- The children remained eligible for Medical Assistance while the TCA case was closed due to the sanction
- The food stamp case remained open during the sanction period

Note: This case will appear on the overdue report as an agency delay

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Application - Decision Notices
- Application - Payment Date
- Sanctions – Child Support
- Assistance Unit – Basic Requirements
- Income – Ineligible Member Calculation